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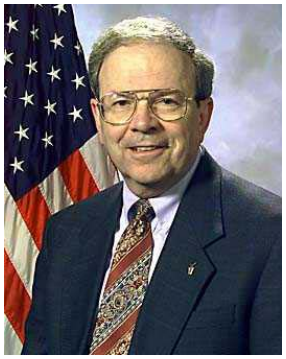
HE Director retires after 45-year career

by Jill Bohn, Air Force Research Laboratory Public Affairs



James Brinkley

WRIGHT-PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Ohio — The Air Force Research Laboratory's Human Effectiveness Director James Brinkley retired from his post with a firm belief that the directorate is on the leading edge of developing technologies to change the way the Air Force operates and fights.

Specifically, he mentioned the recent deployment of distributed mission training capabilities as an example of how HE technologies are changing the way the Air Force, other armed services and coalition partners are training and rehearsing the way they will fight.

"The support that this technology has received from the Air Force Chief of Staff, to the warfighters in Iraq is extremely gratifying," said Brinkley.

A member of the Senior Executive Service, Brinkley entered federal service in 1958. Throughout his career he has held a variety of research and senior technical positions within the Air Force laboratory system. In addition to his duties as director, he also retired as the chairman of the Human Systems Technology Panel for the Department of Defense, and principal Air Force representative to the Biomedical Technology Panel. A 1958 graduate of the Ohio State University, he received a bachelor's degree in industrial design. He tailored his post-graduate studies in a non-traditional way to address the challenges of his various assignments; they range from courses in life sciences at the University of Michigan and UCLA, to business administration at Wright State University and the University of Virginia, to public and international policy at the Federal Executive Institute and the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard.

According to Brinkley, the nation has entered a challenging period that will require changing the traditional approach of providing technologies for conventional warfare.

"We must have a more complete repertoire of actions ranging from non-lethal techniques, including psychological operations, to precisely focused actions to disable weapon systems without causing casualties or to crate a devastating lethal effect while minimizing collateral damage," he said.

"HE is developing exciting new technologies in areas such as cognitive systems engineering, human behavioral modeling, information operations, biotechnology, and the biological effects of directed energy to enable these future warfighting capabilities."

Looking back, Brinkley said that the two best things about his career were the exciting and rewarding projects, and the brilliant, dedicated people with whom he was able to work on the projects with.

"From the very beginning, I was given opportunities to work on challenging technical problems of great importance to our Air Force, its people, and in many cases, to the nation," Brinkley said. "I feel very privileged to have associated with so many extraordinary people, from scientists and engineers who are the very best in their field, to craftsman and technicians who taught me how to convert ideas to reality."

In addition to relaxing and sailing, the former director's plans for retirement include working in the private sector.

"I have an opportunity to apply what I have learned to the area of consumer product safety research," he said. @